

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 – 3 are pending in the application. Claims 1 – 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 112. Claim 1 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as anticipated by Zachrai, EP 0189061. Claims 1 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(e) as anticipated by Zachrai, US Patent Number 6,070,957. Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 USC Section 103 as unpatentable over Zachrai, EP 0189061 or Zachrai '957. Various objections have also been made to the specification, the drawings, and the title. In response, the specification, drawings, title and claims 1 – 3 have been amended. New claims 4 – 18 have been added. Reconsideration of the claims in view of the amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Specification. The title has been objected to as being insufficiently descriptive. In response, the title has been amended to read: “Panel Mounting Device”. The specification has been amended to include the headings provided in 37 C.F.R. 1.77(b). Various other objections to the specification have also been addressed via the amendments above. In view of these amendments, the Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the specification be withdrawn.

Drawings. In the drawings, Fig. 11 has been objected to because the number “50” should be “51”. A revised figure illustrating the proposed changes to correct Fig. 11 is attached. Fig. 1 has been objected to as requiring a bracket. A proposed revision to Fig. 1 providing the bracket is also attached. Fig. 5 was also objected to as requiring a bracket. In response, Fig. 5 has been moved to a separate sheet and, in accordance with M.P.E.P. 608.02, citing 37 C.F.R. Section 1.84 (h)(1), is therefore not required to have a bracket. In view of

these proposed amendments, the Applicants respectfully request that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

Section 112 Rejections. Claim 1 has been amended to correct the deficiencies noted by the Examiner with respect to 35 U.S.C. Section 112. In view of the amendments, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under this section be withdrawn.

Section 102, 103 Rejections. Claim 1, as amended, recites a frame for mounting panels of a cabinet. The frame includes panel mounts (1) which are selectively coupled to frame members (5 or 7). The frame members each include an aperture (4) and a corresponding bore (9), spaced horizontally from the aperture (4) for receiving the panel mount. The panel mount (1) includes an integral member (3) formed from a cutout aperture which extends from a vertical edge of the cutout aperture in a horizontal direction to form a horizontally-extending hook, and a bore (8), spaced horizontally from the aperture. The integral members (3) are inserted in apertures (4, 6) and the panel mount (1) is moved horizontally to align the bores (8) and (9) in the panel mount and frame member. The panel mount (1) is engaged to the frame member by the engagement of the hook in the aperture, and further movement is limited by applying a retaining means such as a pin or stud in the aligned bores (8, 9).

The Zachrai EP reference discloses a device for joining adjacent frame limbs (10, 10') together. The limbs include apertures (15, 15') and associated bores (16, 16') which are spaced vertically from the corresponding aperture. Locking brackets (20, 25) each include two "bentout clevis" hooks (27), with the hook formed along a horizontal edge of the aperture and extending vertically upward. A bore (28) is spaced vertically from and is positioned between the hooks, and receives a screw for fastening the locking brackets (20, 25) in place.

The locking brackets (20, 25) receive a locking slider 30 which includes additional mounting holes for locking the adjacent limbs (10, 10') in place.

The Zachrai '957 reference teaches a frame including side members (31), clamping plates (20), and rails (10). The side members include first and second perpendicular faces, each of which includes a plurality of vertically-spaced apertures and bores. The clamping plate (20) includes both a hook (21) which extends horizontally from the side of the clamping plate and a bore (22). The support rails (10) include apertures (11) and elongated slots (12). The apertures (11) in the support rails (10) are cut out on three sides and bent back along a horizontal edge to form hooks extending vertically downward which are connected to apertures in a first face of the side member 31. The hook (21) of the clamping plate (20) is coupled to the aperture provided in the second, perpendicular face, and a bolt (50) is connected through the elongated slot (12) in the rail (10) and into the bore (22) in the clamping member (20) to clamp the rail (10) to the side member (31).

The Zachrai references, therefore, teach bent-out hooks which are formed from a cut-out and bent along a horizontal edge and extend vertically upward or downward, rather than a hook which is bent along a vertical edge and which extends horizontally, as in the invention as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, the frame members or limbs include bores which are spaced vertically from a corresponding aperture, rather than horizontally. This distinction is important, as described in the specification on page 1, lines 22 – 30, because the horizontal configuration of the invention allows the panel mounts to extend the full length of the side members. As shown by Zachrai EP, in a vertical configuration, the locking brackets must be shorter than the limbs in order to allow the locking brackets to be aligned vertically with the apertures and bores.

Moreover, the horizontal configuration of the hooks and apertures in the invention as recited in claim 1 allows the heavy panel mount to be moved horizontally into position, thereby making installation of the panel mount easier for the user. The member which is being attached does not have to be forced up against the force of gravity as it is connected, as in Zachrai EP, where the hook extends upward and therefore must be pushed upward into position, or held up to prevent it from being dropped in place during any necessary alignment, as in Zachrai '957 where the weight of the panel forces the downwardly-extending hook into the aperture.

Furthermore, in the horizontal configuration of the present invention, the horizontally-extending hook connects the frame to the panel mount and the fastener or pin provided in the hole limits further motion of the panel mount with respect to the frame. In the Zachrai EP device, on the other hand, the upwardly-directed hooks do not hold any of the weight of the locking brackets, and the fastener provided between the hooks therefore is a critical structural component for holding the weight of the bracket and maintaining the bracket in position. In the Zachrai '957 device, a very complicated bracing device is provided in order to retain the position of the attached rail, as opposed to the simple hook and fastening device provided in the present invention. These prior art connection systems are therefore significantly different from the invention as recited in claim 1.

New claim 4, and associated dependent claims 5 – 12, and new claim 13, and associated dependent claims 14 – 18, each also recite a frame including connectors provided in the horizontal configuration described above. In this configuration, the panel mount includes, a "hook" which is formed along a vertical edge of the panel mount and which extends horizontally, and an adjacent bore spaced horizontally from the hook. In the frame

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member, a bore is located adjacent an aperture, and is spaced horizontally therefrom. To connect the panel mount to the frame member, the hook is received in the aperture and the bores are aligned horizontally. In view of these distinctions from the prior art, claim 1, as amended, new claims 4 and 13, and the associated dependent claims are all believed patentable over the cited prior art. Therefore, the applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 – 3 be withdrawn, and that a notice of allowance be issued for claims 1 – 18.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 that may be due on this application to Deposit Account 17-0055. The Commissioner is also authorized to treat this amendment and any future reply in this matter requiring a petition for an extension of time as incorporating a petition for extension of time for the appropriate length of time as provided by 37 C.F.R. § 136(a)(3).

Respectfully submitted,

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